



Newsletter Spring 2025

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Mam Tor plans

The BHS is working with the National Trust to improve access for horse riders and other users in the Mam Tor area, one of the busiest destinations in the Peak Park. A route through the woods is being developed which will bypass the car park, making it safer for riders and mountain bikers leaving the Mam Tor/Rushup Edge bridleways. A solution is being sought to deal with a difficulty at Windy Knoll, where currently only a FP takes users off the busy roads at the head of the Winnats Pass. The FP is not accessible for riders because of a narrow FP



gate at Mam Tor and a padlocked field gate at the Rowter Farm exit. The land is owned by the NT, which is considering a permissive BW. The main issue, as with many places in the national park, is off-road motorbike use. The aim is to come up with a gate combination which will allow access only for legitimate users (walkers, horse riders, cyclists and those with limited mobility) but allow sheep and cattle to use the Knoll during the grazing season.

The FP gate at Mam Tor



PEAK HORSEPOWER

Park up and RIDE

Park Up and Ride

This Summer Peak Horsepower is running a self-guided ride-out league called Park Up and Ride (PUR). PHP members who sign up to the league will get GPX files of seven rides, one a month from April to October. Each ride will be in a different part of the Peak District starting from a horse-friendly transport parking spot. Riders can do the trails in their own time, individually or with friends.

The scheme is a fun and friendly way to highlight some of the Peak District's bridleways. There is a slight competitive angle as riders will get points for each ride they do (photographic proof needed) and bonus points will be awarded for answering questions on the route, the best photograph of the month and random other whims of the organisers. And, of course points will mean prizes.

This year Park Up and Ride (PUR) is Facebook-based but if we run it again next year we may look at other ways of organising it.

We are asking for a "suggested/required" donation of £10.00 to join the league. If riders would like a commemorative optional rosette there is an extra £5.00 charge to have it, posted out at the end of the campaign.

So far over 30 people have signed up. The funds raised will help us do more bridleway work, from installing new horse-friendly gates to researching and taking legal action to restore bridleways, or secure higher status to relevant rights of way.

Entry to PUR is via a Google form which can be found in the FEATURES section of the Peak Horsepower Facebook page – scroll down to reach it. The entry form comes with a complete set of rules and quirks of the league.

Cut-off date abandoned

Some welcome news: the government has pledged to abolish the 2031 cut-off date for recording historic rights of way. It has recognised that local authorities simply cannot cope with the torrent of applications they are receiving. Abolishing the cut-off will require amending the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, the legislation that first created a cut-off date. We understand that the government intends to do this as soon as it can but that the timing depends on when a relevant piece of legislation is before parliament. The most likely candidate is a new Bill on access. Defra estimates that there are around 40,000 miles of unrecorded ways which will now be saved.

White Peak Loop officially opened

Thursday 20 March saw the official launch of Derbyshire County Council's White Peak Loop, a 42-mile circular route designed for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. The Loop connects

Matlock and Bakewell then goes onward along the Monsal Trail and the Pennine Bridleway National Trail before merging onto the High Peak Trail and back to Matlock.

Looking ahead, the plan is to expand the trail to a 50 mile route linking Matlock, Bakewell and Buxton along traffic free trails and quiet lanes. At present horse riders can only enjoy part of the route, but the plan is to make more of it accessible and where this is impractical an alternative route is to be found.

Two PHP committee members Claire Brooks (our Treasurer) and Charlotte Gilbert (our Chair) were invited to the opening to represent Derby and Derbyshire Local Access Forum (Claire) and Peak District Local Access Forum (Charlotte). Claire challenged Council Leader Barry Lewis to include the needs of horse riders in future developments. Claire and Charlotte will continue to lobby for the rights of horse riders through their Local Access Forum work. For more information on the White Peak Loop follow the link:

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/access/white-peak-loop/white-peak-loop.aspx>

High Peak Trail: improved or...?

March saw the completion of resurfacing work on the High Peak Trail between Dowlow and Sparklow where, according to the Peak Park, 1.5 miles of the 'narrowing' trail has been widened and resurfaced with 'recycled aggregate'. This was met with some dismay on social media by horse riders and other users because in widening the trail the grass verges at either side have been removed.



The trail isn't over-used by horse riders along this section but the verges allowed riders who do use it to get off the limestone and occasionally enjoy a canter. Closer inspection of the aggregate surface revealed bits of recycled rubbish, glass, metal and broken ceramics, not unlike what happened when Pin Dale in Castleton was resurfaced some years ago.

We'll have to see how it wears in and whether any further aggregate is brought up to the surface. Meanwhile, watch this trail!

Before and after repairs - picture courtesy of Peak District National Park

Peak Park Active Travel plan to take in horse riding

The National Parks have been invited to produce a National Park Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. This will take in highway authority plans being funded by Active Travel England (ATE).

Until now ATE has had a very urban focus, aiming to make walking and cycling preferred choices for getting to work, going to school and doing shopping. Now that the focus has moved to the National Parks there is a shift towards leisure activity, the ATE is revising its guidance and the Peak Park is including horse riders in its thinking about the infrastructure plan. PDNPA has already held a series of workshops for user groups about how the existing rights of way network could be connected or extended, and it has carried out an online public consultation. A big thank you to everyone who braved the consultation mapping technology and marked on the map your favourite places and desired improvements for horse riders.

A working group of The Peak District Local Access Forum (PDLAF) has oversight of the developing infrastructure plan. Peak Horsepower and the BHS are represented on the group so we will be able to keep you posted. Meanwhile, the raw data from the online survey shows widespread equestrian activity across the National Park and a strong response from horse riders as a user group.

Horse-friendly carparks – get the spreadsheet, and help add to it

By PHP car park guru Elen Rees

Over the winter when the ponies were hairy, the evenings dark and the days misty and rainy, I compiled an excel spreadsheet of trailer/horse box friendly carparks in the Peak Park.

The file is based mainly on Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA) carparks. Using the hive brain of the Peak Horsepower members, the spreadsheet highlights which of the PDNP carparks are horse transport friendly. Other non PDNPA car parks have been added plus some trailer/box friendly laybys/pull ins. The area covered is roughly the Peak Park area, but there are gaps and some boundaries have been smudged.

The spreadsheet is in the files section of the Peak Horsepower Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/PeakHorsepower/permalink/2354450751599825/> It's called trailerparking, dated 04/02/202. It does need a bit of a health warning, none of the carparks has been "officially" checked and what some riders think is OK may not be true for all riders, but it is a start and it is definitely useable. It is a working document which will grow and improve.

I'm not at all techy but I thought it may be good to get the carparks marked up on a Google type map. Can anyone help me do this – or at least hold my hand while I do the first few? Would this be worthwhile? Is it easy?! Also, do people think it would be a good idea to link rides to the car parks? And is there a neat way of doing this? Please contact me on elenphp@gmail.com

Best car park of all



For horse riders, the jewel in the crown in Peak Park car parking is Hartington Station.

It is amazing. A dedicated area with plenty of room, a corral, a mounting block, sheltered tacking up area, water – even a muck heap.

And for the human, toilets and tea and coffee (sometimes). If you've not been, our April Park UP and Ride (see page 2) goes from there

The corral at the PDNPA car park at Hartington Station – photo courtesy of Rachel Dowle

Useful info about the PDNPA carparks

The PDNPA owns and manages 44 car parks. Thirty-one have a Pay & Display system. Cashless payment by the RingGo app is also available. A list of Peak District National Park (PDNPA) Car Parks is also at <https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/visiting/planning-your-visit/parking>

Some of the car parks are small and fill up early in the day, so be prepared to make alternative plans. The Peak Park Authority ask people not to park on grass verges, on either side of double-yellow lines, by farm gates or other undesignated areas as this can reduce access for farm vehicles, the emergency services and damage protected habitats.

Parking fees for horse boxes/trailers are £5.90 for 2 hours or £9.60 for a full day. Annual PDNPA Parking permits are also available. An annual permit is £78 (plus an extra £1.50 if it is posted). Permit holders cannot be guaranteed a parking space, as the spaces get filled on a 'first come, first served' basis. Annual permits include horseboxes and trailers. The permits are not vehicle specific but must be displayed at all times when in use.

You can purchase a parking permit in one of the following ways:

- Order from [Peak District National Park Shop](#) (scroll down to Parking Permit)
- From one of the PDNPA visitor centres
- The Customer and Democratic Support Team on 01629 816200 or email customer.service@peakdistrict.gov.uk

Parking prices went up considerably on 1st April 2025, but please remember that government grants to the National Parks have been cut considerably. The funds raised from parking fees go to maintaining carparks, trails and toilets, protecting the landscape and helping to pay for removing litter – about 70 tonnes a year!

Forestry England – end of the permit scheme: what does this mean for us locally?

Following a comprehensive public review of its horse riding paid-for permit system, which has lasted more than two years, Forestry England has removed the requirement to have permits to ride horses in 49 of its woodlands. However, it seems that FE is now trying to encourage family/rider membership at local forests for £74 p.a. or national membership for £94 p.a. These prices include parking and other activities, mainly aimed at families.

For riders in the Peak District, the closest FE woodlands are Matlock Moors forests to the east and Delamere Forest in Cheshire. For some reason the Matlock Moors are not depicted on FE's map. The woodlands are fragmented and members of Matlock and District Bridleways Access Group (MADBAG) have long been lobbying various managers to improve connectivity between the woodlands and to allow riding across the whole of the forest. There is no official parking area and many tracks are very boggy in the winter months.

In its [Matlock Moor future plans | Forestry England](#), FE is trying to allay local people's fears about the proposed £30m investment to construct 75 log cabins and associated infrastructure in partnership with Forest Holidays. FE says that the planning proposal will not affect the public's enjoyment of the forest trails and that improvements will be made with new, all-weather trails. However, these trails are only within Farley Moor woodland and do not extend to the other sites. Local people are campaigning against the planning application. See [Save Matlock Forest - A campaign to save Farley Moor from development](#) There is a petition you can sign on the website.

Hollinsclough Rakes – the saga continues

Staffordshire County Council has now spent over £1m on repairing and trying to protect the Hollinsclough Rakes (Swan Lake and Lymer Rake). But to no avail. The Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) it put on the Rakes to exclude 4x4s and motorbikes has been quashed by the High Court. We are still waiting to find out what has gone wrong. As far as we could see Staffordshire had made no legal errors in making its TRO but it backed down when faced with the cost of a full High Court hearing. The £1m was for the cost of repairs. Staffordshire's

legal costs are on top of this and have not yet been disclosed. If clearer evidence were ever needed of the inability of the current TRO system to protect unsurfaced highways, this is surely it.

Kirklees TRO - Ramsden Rd and other routes

In an effort to deal with off-roading on Ramsden Road and other routes in the Holme Valley area Kirklees has finally got in place a TRO. It has taken a series of legal blunders and nearly 20 years for Kirklees to get this far, but even now the TRO is only partial. 4x4s will be excluded but under a permit scheme an unlimited number of motor bikes can continue to use the routes concerned. Carriage drivers are not mentioned in the TRO but are *de facto* being excluded because Kirklees is putting in place locked gates and boulders.

Update on Derbyshire rights of way claims

Applications and consultations

There are now 257 Derbyshire claims listed on the BHS's Dobbin Data portal/map, up 48 since last year. Some are for footpaths. Processing these claims is still extremely slow (around five per year) and one of the two officers dealing with Derbyshire resigned early this year. A new officer is now in post and has prior experience of the public rights of way legal system which can only help improve matters.

Initial consultations on applications have slowed down (they should be done within one year of the application being accepted). sDCC is still working through applications first recorded on Dobbin back 2019. At that point Derbyshire was managing around six consultations a year. (Other applications not on Dobbin and not yet consulted on go back to 2005.) There has been no action at all on Derbyshire's Dobbin applications since June 2024. This is probably due to Derbyshire concentrating on rights of way diversions. There have been at least 20 recent diversion consultations (usually affecting footpaths around properties). DCC received around £2,000 per diversion over the past 18 months.

Definitive Map Orders in the past 12 Months:

Orders Confirmed

1. Chapel-en-le-Frith – Add Byway Open to All Traffic to Gypsy Lane and upgrade FP91 to Restricted Byway. Although confirmed in Sep 2022, this route is still not open to equestrians due to gateways being needed to bypass stiles. The BHS Access Field Officer for the Midlands is chasing DCC over this matter. A site meeting is to be held with the landowner, DCC and the BHS week in early May to discuss bridlegate solutions'
2. Over Haddon, Youlgreave – Bridleway status confirmed by Planning Inspectorate (PINS)/ Secretary of State (SoS) (with modifications) 29 Feb 2024 - from Lathkill Dale via Meadow Place Grange to Back Lane. BW signs still not up so still being used for off-roading.
3. Wirksworth – Add RB between St Helens Lane and Breamfield Lane – confirmed by PINS/SoS 8 May 2024.
4. Eaton & Alsop/Newton Grange – Add a BW from Dam Lane to Tissington Trail (2017). Confirmed by SoS 21 May 2024 (DCC advertised 12 Sep 2024). This new route also requires gateways to replace stiles – DCC to be requested to follow up with landowner.

Orders referred to Planning Inspectorate/Secretary of State

1. Wirksworth, Summer Lane – BW claim to upgrade Fps in 2018. Following objections, PINS requested interested parties submit Written Representations. Having surveyed the route on 7 January 2025, the inspector has awarded an interim Order of RB status which will require further advertising.
2. Matlock Town/Tansley – RB claim to upgrade FPs (2018). Similar to the above, Written representations sent to PINS 2 March. Decision will be made once inspector surveys route.
3. Cromford – Upgrade of FP41 to BW (claim made 2018). Following objections, a Public Inquiry was set for 29/30 April 2025. However, after receiving no Statement of Case from objectors, PINS moved to Written Representations. Awaiting an inspector's appraisal of the route and final decision.

Orders Made

1. Doveridge – (Claim made Oct 2018). Order made 6 Feb 2025 to upgrade FP 26 (part) and FP 33/34 to BW. Objections by 20 March.

Initial Consultations

1. Wingerworth/Grassmoor, Winsick & Hasland – Claim to add a BOAT along part of Mill Lane from Derby Road to FP 3. (Advertised in March 2025 from claim originally made in 2004 by the Trail Riders Fellowship – many BOAT claims were put 'on the back burner' by Derbyshire as they didn't consider motorised use applications constituted towards new public rights of way). The BHS has responded showing historical evidence supporting mainly BW and a cul-de-sac BOAT.
2. Hayfield – Claim by Peak & Northern Footpath Society to add a RB along Ridge Top Lane to FP 4, advertised June 2025. Unfortunately, FP 4 doesn't appear to have historic higher rights and the connection at Hayfield is only along extremely busy roads – local BHS officer stated riders have never used the route in over 50 years.

Many thanks to Karen Haywood for this update and for her work researching and claiming routes

You can contact us at

peakhorsepowersecretary@hotmail.co.uk